

Boston Early Music Festival

INTERNATIONAL BAROQUE OPERA • CELEBRATED CONCERTS • WORLD-FAMOUS EXHIBITION

Boston Early Music Festival
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 14, 2017

Boston Early Music Festival presents The Tallis Scholars, directed by Peter Phillips, in a program celebrating Renaissance composer Heinrich Isaac, on Friday, December 8 in Harvard Square

ARTISTS: The Tallis Scholars (*United Kingdom*)
Peter Phillips, *director*

WHEN: Friday, December 8, 2017 at 8pm
St. Paul Church, Bow and Arrow Streets, Cambridge

PROGRAM: Celebrating Heinrich Isaac (ca. 1450-1517)

Josquin des Prez: *Gaude Virgo*

Josquin: *Stabat Mater*

Josquin: *Absalom fili mi*

Nicolas Gombert: *Lugebat Absalom*

Heinrich Isaac: *Optime divino*

John Browne: *Stabat juxta*

Isaac: *Tota pulchra es*

Josquin: *Inter natos mulierum*

Gombert: *Regina caeli*

TICKETS: Tickets are priced at **\$25, \$45, \$55, and \$75** each, and can be purchased at www.BEMF.org and **617-661-1812**; a \$5 discount for students, seniors, and groups is available by calling 617-661-1812. Subscription discounts are available with the purchase of three or more programs on the 2017-2018 Season.

ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

Celebrate the season in high style with one of Early Music's truly essential ensembles, The Tallis Scholars with director Peter Phillips. These extraordinary singers return to BEMF for their 29th consecutive year in a sublime program showcasing masterworks by the influential and prolific Renaissance composer Heinrich Isaac, alongside music by his brilliant contemporary Josquin des Prez. Marvel at these peerless performances of Isaac's opulent motet, *Optime divino*, the transcendent beauty of Josquin's setting of the *Stabat Mater*, and much more, including works by fellow contemporaries Browne and Gombert.

Isaac and Josquin were among the most preeminent musicians of their day in Europe, and found themselves in competition for prestigious posts with powerful patrons. In 1502, the Duke Ercole d'Este of Ferrara was considering both composers for his new *maestro di cappella*. In an oft-quoted letter advising the Duke on his choice, Italian singer Gian de Artiganova assessed Isaac as the more hard-working and well-liked of the pair, while he found Josquin to be the more gifted composer, albeit more temperamental, and more expensive. Josquin got the job, but fortunately we don't have to choose; we have the luxury of enjoying the masterworks of these two giants side-by-side, along with their contemporaries.

ASSOCIATED EVENTS:

There will a Pre-Concert Talk at 7pm with The Tallis Scholars Director Peter Phillips.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

Over four decades of performance and a catalogue of award-winning recordings for Gimell, **Peter Phillips** and **The Tallis Scholars** have done more than any other group to establish sacred vocal music of the Renaissance as one of the great repertoires of Western classical music. They have brought Renaissance works to a wider audience in churches, cathedrals, and venues on every continent on the planet except Antarctica. This includes the Royal Albert Hall, the Sistine Chapel, Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall in New York, Philharmonic Hall in Berlin, Saint Mark's in Venice, the Seoul Arts Centre in Korea, Shakespeare's Globe in London, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Beijing Concert Hall, and the Sydney Opera House. The Tallis Scholars continue to develop their exclusive sound, praised by reviewers for its supple clarity and tone, and to bring fresh interpretations to music not only of the past, but to works by contemporary composers such as Pärt, Tavener, Whitacre, Muhly and Jackson.

Peter Phillips has made an impressive if unusual reputation for himself in dedicating his life's work to the research and performance of Renaissance polyphony. In 1973, he founded The Tallis Scholars, with whom he has appeared in almost 2000 concerts and made over 60 discs, encouraging interest in polyphony all over the world. Apart from The Tallis Scholars, Peter Phillips continues to work with other specialist ensembles, including the BBC Singers, Collegium Vocale Ghent, and the Netherlands Chamber Choir. In 2014 he launched the London International A Cappella Choir Competition in St. John's Smith Square, attracting choirs from all over the world. In 2005 Peter Phillips was made a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the French Minister of Culture, a decoration intended to honor individuals who have contributed significantly to the understanding of French culture in the world.

RESOURCES:

Download artist photos: <http://www.bemf.org/pages/press/images.htm>

BEMF's 2017–2018 Season Press Release: http://www.bemf.org/pages/press/082317_1718season.htm

ABOUT THE BOSTON EARLY MUSIC FESTIVAL:

Recognized as the preeminent early music presenter and Baroque opera producer in North America, the **Boston Early Music Festival (BEMF)** has been credited with securing Boston's reputation as "America's early music capital" (*The Boston Globe*). Founded in 1981, BEMF offers diverse programs and activities, including one GRAMMY-winning and four GRAMMY-nominated opera recordings, an annual concert series that brings early music's brightest stars to the Boston and New York concert stages, and a biennial week-long Festival and Exhibition recognized as the "world's leading festival of early music" (*The Times*, London). The 20th Boston Early Music Festival will take place from June 9-16, 2019, and will feature fully staged performances of Agostino Steffani's *Orlando generoso* as the centerpiece opera. BEMF's Artistic Leadership includes Artistic Directors **Paul O'Dette** and **Stephen Stubbs**, Opera Director **Gilbert Blin**, Orchestra Director **Robert Mealy**, and Dance Director **Melinda Sullivan**.

The 2017–2018 Boston Early Music Festival Concert Series is presented with support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, National Endowment for the Arts, ConstellationCenter, WGBH Radio Boston, Harpsichord Clearing House, and The Gregory E. Bulger Foundation.

For more information, images, press tickets, or to schedule an interview, please contact Kathleen Fay at 617-661-1812 or email kathy@bemf.org.

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